



Bryce Yokomizo
Director

March 31, 2003

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Bryce Yokomizo, Director

SUBJECT: **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: MOTION (SYN. 38 - FEBRUARY 4, 2003)
ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER (EBT) CARDS FOR THE
DISBURSEMENT OF FOOD STAMP BENEFITS**

This is in response to your Board Motion in which you instructed DPSS to examine the feasibility of applying for a federal waiver to implement a program that would allow homeless, elderly and disabled public assistance program participants to purchase prepared food with food stamp benefits.

We have shared with the State your Board's interest in implementing this program in Los Angeles County. The State advised us that no federal waiver is required to allow homeless, elderly and disabled food stamp recipients to purchase prepared food with their benefits as a State option already exists in federal regulations. However, State regulations are needed to implement this program. With its implementation of Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) in February 2003, San Francisco County received authorization to pilot this program prior to the release of State regulations. The State does not plan to allow another county to implement this program prior to the release of State regulations.

The California Department of Social Services is currently preparing the regulations which they expect to be final in October 2003. This would allow all California counties the option of implementing this program. In the interim, counties are being encouraged to evaluate the San Francisco experience prior to implementing this program.

We will begin working with the State toward a plan to implement the use of food stamp benefits to purchase prepared food by homeless, elderly and disabled food stamp recipients with the full implementation of EBT. We will meet with San Francisco to identify implementation issues, identify associated costs and report back to the Board within 30 days of receipt of the State's regulations with our recommendations.

BY:cl

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Chief Administrative Officer
Auditor-Controller
County Counsel